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ABSTRACT

This booklet was designed to facilitate interactions and communication with the people of Japan by providing information about their customs, attitudes and other cultural characteristics which influence their actions and values. A brief description of Japan is given, covering the following: history, government, the economy, education, transportation, communications, health facilities, the people, the family, religion, language, diet, the arts, and sports. The cultural traits and values involved in the Japanese modesty and reserve, saving face, traditionalism, passiveness, the situational ethic, and nonindividualism in a vertical society are explained through brief descriptions of realistic situations involving American visitors to Japan. A self-test is given after each situation. Information is also given on: greetings, visiting, eating, gestures, punctuality, general courtesies, telephone, shopping, the bath, homes, weddings, funerals, dress, the postal system, eating out, holidays and festivals, and signs. A list of useful Japanese phrases is given. In an appendix, descriptions are given of Nihon and nationalism, the emperor, and the samurai, and several stories about Japanese feelings and attitudes are provided. An annotated bibliography is also provided. (SW)

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Building Bridges of Understanding

PEOPLE OF Japan

A Brigham Young University LANGUAGE RESEARCH CENTER Communication Learning Aid

The information in this Learning Aid was taken from many sources which were the best available to the editors at the time of preparation. Views expressed or implied in this publication are not necessarily those of Brigham Young University.

The editors have tried to present the characteristics of these people in an objective manner, without undue bias or emphasis. Where we have failed, we apologize for the erroneous impressions that may result and request that comments and corrections be sent to the Language & Intercultural Research Center, 240 B-34, BYU, Provo, Utah, 84602.

The editors are aware of the inherent dangers in using illustrations of a caricature nature since the style depends on distortion or exaggeration of features or mannerisms. The illustrations are intended to enliven the presentation, to make a contrast more graphic, and to help the reader visualize and retain a concept more easily. It is not implied that an idea presented by the illustration does reflect reality.

We appreciate and acknowledge the comments and contributions of various individuals and organizations in the preparation of this publication.

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Introduction

The purpose of this Communication Learning Aid is to help you to be more effective in understanding and communicating with other people, especially those of other cultures.

It has been said that in some ways you are like all other people, like some other people, and like no other person. Like you, for example, Japanese would feel sad at a funeral, be amused at a good joke, and become irritated if bothered while trying to sleep. Love, anger, and fear are found to some degree in all humans. Desires to be accepted and to have peace of mind also are universal. However, different people possess different attitudes and values, with distinct patterns of behavior.

This Learning Aid can help you to communicate better with people who are like you in some ways and not like you in other ways. These ways are not necessarily right or wrong, better or worse; they may be just different, unfamiliar, and perhaps even offensive. This publication discusses some differences in such things as food, laws, customs, religion, language, dress, and basic attitudes which will be encountered in Japan.

People perceive their relationships to those around them by thousands of subtle signs. Something as simple as knowing when and where to walk or sit is a "cultural cue." The loss of familiar cues when entering a new environment may produce strain and frustration. This cultural disorientation is commonly called culture shock. As one learns to communicate, judiciously using the new cultural cues, the severity and amount of frustration and disorientation are reduced.

This Learning Aid will provide tools to help you recognize the situations that may cause this confusion. It will help you develop skills which, if successfully applied, will help you to communicate with the people of Japan more effectively and make your association with them pleasant and meaningful.

The need to communicate effectively with persons from different cultural environments continues to grow. This Learning Aid has a basic emphasis of preparing you for actual experiences interacting and communicating with the people of Japan in their environment and culture. Of course, you will enjoy and learn much from this Aid even if your opportunity for a first hand experience is limited. Learning about another country may be by *study*, *instruction*, or *experience*.

Learning how to better communicate with the people of another culture can also help you to become a more effective communicator with the people of your own culture.

Those already generally familiar with Japan will find specific communication hints and guidelines beginning on page 10.

The Japanese call it home

The Japanese archipelago consists of four principal islands--Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu--plus thousands of small islands strung out like a necklace for 2,000 miles along the rim of northeastern Asia opposite China, Korea, and Siberia.

The 120 miles of choppy water between Japan and the Asian mainland were an unbridgeable moat, and no foreigners successfully penetrated Japan throughout its long history until 1945.

Japan's insularity has determined its remarkable ethnic and cultural homogeneity through twenty centuries. Physical separation from the Asian mainland permitted the Japanese to develop a highly indigenous culture, which has had relatively few intrusions from foreign pressures. Foreign ideas were sifted and Japanized. The people developed a feeling of oneness with their native land, a country that for them is often visualized as a living entity with a heart and a spirit.

Located in the middle latitudes at the northeastern end of the Asian monsoon area, Japan has a population of 110 million people and a land area of 145,670 square miles. It is about the size of California, but only 20 percent of its highly mountainous land is flat enough to cultivate or settle, so almost all its people actually live in an area about half the size of the state of Iowa.

About 80 percent of the land area is mountainous, mostly forested. Mt. Fuji, Japan's most famous mountain, is also the highest, with an altitude of 12,395 feet. Japan's numerous hot springs, volcanoes, rivers, and lakes enhance the scenic beauty of the country. Unfortunately, Japan's location and topography make it the frequent victim of typhoons and earthquakes.

Japan's climate varies from north to south, mainly due to the continental air current from the northwest and the oceanic air current from the southeast. The seasons are clearly divided into spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Japan's climate resembles that of the eastern seaboard of the United States.

Warm winds and currents from the south join with cool air from Siberia, and ample rain provides a lush vegetation which has been the delight of poets and painters for centuries. Flowering azalea, plum and cherry are everywhere in their season. Japanese gardens are famous for their pools with lotus blossoms, water lilies, huge carp, and miniature trees and plants. Birds are numerous and varied in Japan and include herons, hawks, nightingales, sparrows, and cuckoos. Songbirds are enjoyed and protected. The only harmful animals found in Japan are the brown bear, wild boar, and a few poisonous snakes.

With an extremely irregular coastline of 13,000 miles, Japan abounds in good natural harbors which are a great aid to industry, communication, and trade.

Land of the Rising Sun

When introduced to someone, the first question you may ask is,"Where do you live? The next question might be, "Where is that?" If further interested, "What is it like there?" is likely to follow. Asking these questions is an attempt to find similarities or to learn something new. Such conversation may be a stepping stone for increasing understanding.

Before you can best understand and communicate with the Japanese, you need to know what is important to them, their customs and attitudes, their personal lifestyle, and the national characteristics which influence their actions and values. Few things are more meaningful to a person than "home." Becoming familiar with the following facts about Japan will help you to orient yourself and remove some "fear of the unknown." It will also help you to begin to understand what is important to the Japanese. This, in turn, will become a basis for effective communication with them.

History

As mentioned previously, Japan's location and topography have made it the frequent victim of typhoons and earthquakes. The stamina and courage needed to cope with often-repeated natural disasters had another important end product. In constantly rebuilding, the Japanese have learned to adapt to new circumstances with extraordinary rapidity, and to telescope work which might require decades in most other countries into a few years of intense activity.

Much of Japan's current history, as well as its past, becomes more understandable when we know this. What is described today as Japan's "economic miracle"--which has seen a devastated, heavily populated country with almost no natural resources become one of the world's most dynamic economies in barely two decades--has been accomplished by men whose ancestors for generations have had to rebuild their destroyed homes and then rely only on their own hard work and courage. The heart of Japan's experience has been the constant need for the human element to win out over harsh natural adversity. Of course many other circumstances, such as a centralized government, national unity, and favorable outside circumstances, have contributed to Japan's development.

It is probable that the Japanese of today emerged from the mixing of several ethnic groups. The earliest people of Japan were primitive hunters and farmers. Living in small villages, these prehistoric Japanese cultivated rice paddies and irrigated fields. They had no writing system, and worshipped family ancestors and nature gods.

According to Japanese legend, the first state was founded in 660 B.C. Japanese society was consolidated politically by the beginning of the fourth century. This ancient society was ruled by an imperial family and related nobility. The former continues to the present day.

Throughout her history, Japan has shown an aptitude for the assimilation of foreign ideas and the adaptation of foreign techniques to her own tradition. During these early years, Korea and China were the origin for Japan's arts, crafts, and learning, on the basis of which Japan's own culture gradually developed. Through Chinese

manuscripts, Japan learned the rudiments of medicine, the secrets of the calendar and astronomy, and philosophy. In 538 Buddhism was introduced through China and Korea. Mahayana Buddhism and Shinto, Japan's native religious faiths, were important elements in the development of Japanese culture.

In 794, the state headquarters were established in Kyoto. The next three centuries are considered Japan's classic age of art and literature. During these few centuries, Japan became a distinct culture.

From the thirteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century, the *samurai*, or feudal lords, held political power. In contrast to the decadence of Kyoto, with its cultivation of the effete arts, the *samurai* ideal encouraged Spartan virtues and ascetic discipline. Zen Buddhism was the dominant spiritual power in this period.

Toward the end of the sixteenth century, civil war prevailed throughout the country as provincial lords battled for supremacy. In 1590 order was finally restored.

Japan's unique architectural style, incorporating serene gardens, was developed during this period. The tea ceremony and the art of flower arrangement, which are characteristic of Japanese culture, were widely practiced. The *kabuki* drama, one of Japan's traditional theatrical arts, was enjoyed by the general population, and other arts were developed.

A rigid class distinction into *samurai*, peasant farmers, craftsmen, and merchants was gradually

established. The *samurai* held political power, but with the growth of cities and commerce, merchants gradually attained greater social influence.

Toward the middle of the sixteenth century, Japan came in contact with Europeans for the first time. The first Westerners to visit Japan were Portuguese traders. They were followed by Jesuit missionaries and groups of Spaniards. Trade relations were also established with the Dutch and the British. European missionaries converted numerous Japanese to Christianity.

Fearing that Japan was being prepared by European nations as new colonial material, the government expelled all Westerners in about 1614. Some Dutch traders were allowed to bring one ship a year to Japan, and the Chinese were also granted trade rights. All Japanese were forbidden to leave the country under pain of death. In fact it was forbidden to build any ship large enough to undertake an ocean voyage. This social isolation of Japan ended in 1853 with the arrival of the United States Navy under the command of Matthew C. Perry, who had been instructed to open up both trade and diplomatic relations with Japan.

Full sovereignty was restored to the emperor in 1868. By the 1890's Japan had become the first modern, industrial nation in Asia. Even though relations were generally good with the Western nations, Japan remained suspicious of Western imperialism, and, using its newly acquired economic and industrial powers, Japan sought to strengthen and protect her empire. In the late nineteenth century, Japan defeated forces of the Manchu empire in Korea, and Korea became a Japanese protectorate. The Chinese also ceded Formosa (now Taiwan) and the Pescadores. In 1904 Japan decisively defeated Russian forces and was accepted, for the first time, as one of the leading powers of the world.

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, tension increased between the United States and Japan. Cultural and language barriers increased misunderstanding. Militarists under Prime Minister Hideki Tojo, fearing that the United States would curb Japanese expansion in the Pacific, bombed Pearl Harbor. By 1942, Japan had stretched its bounds from the Philippines to the Aleutian Islands of Alaska. Though the United States tactic of "island hopping" broke through Japan's tough perimeter and cut her defense, Japan was a formidable foe, especially in guerilla warfare. Finally, in July of 1945, the Tojo cabinet fell and Japan surrendered unconditionally after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

After being defeated in World War II, Japan experienced foreign occupation for the first time in her history. After nearly seven years of occupation by the Allied powers, she regained her sovereignty in April 1952.

Since the war, the United States and Japan have remained close politically and economically. Unburdened of enormous military expenditures, Japan turned to developing its economic strengths.

Government

The present constitution of Japan became law in 1947. Under this constitution the emperor is the symbol of the state and the unity of the people. Japan's present emperor, Hirohito, has been chief of state since 1926. He performs most ceremonial functions and does not interfere with Japan's law-making bodies.

Since the end of World War II, Japan has been a constitutional monarchy. The Diet, the supreme legislative organ, derives its powers from the people and has the authority to enact laws and determine national policies. It is a bicameral organ consisting of the House of Representatives and the House of Councilors. Members of both houses are elected by the people. All citizens may vote at age twenty.

The principal executive body is the cabinet, which consists of a prime minister, who is nominated by the Diet from among its members, and twenty cabinet members appointed by the prime minister. It executes national policies. All judicial powers are vested in the courts of justice.

Government powers decentralized after World War II to establish local autonomy. Japan is divided into forty-six prefectures or states, each of which elects a governor. The mayors of cities, or heads of towns and villages, are elected by the local inhabitants.

Economy

Production of sufficient food for her people is not an easy task for Japan. Because only 20 percent of the land is suitable for farming, 35 percent of all food must be imported. Japan's agriculture is based mainly on the family enterprise, but productivity is very high. Rice accounts for 51 percent of farming income. Other major crops are wheat, barley, soy beans, and many vegetables. Livestock production has increased substantially. Despite the fact that Japan's forests cover nearly 70 percent of the total land area, much wood is imported each year.

Since she is surrounded by ocean, Japan enjoys geographic advantages for fishing. Japan's prominent position among the world's fishing nations is

also due to her efforts in pioneering new fishing grounds and the introduction of advanced fishing techniques. The largest portion of the marine catch is consumed as food.

Prior to World War II, Japan was already highly industrialized, although much of it was light industry, such as textiles. After the war Japan built up much more heavy and chemical industry. Japanese industry experienced an amazing recovery from the damage it suffered during the war. Stimulated by increased demand for industrial products of high quality the Japanese economy grew rapidly, and in recent years heavy and chemical industries have come to dominate the industrial structure.

Machinery (including transportation equipment and precision instruments), chemicals, food and beverages, textiles, iron, and steel account for about two-thirds of manufactured products. Production of durable consumer goods such as automobiles and electrical appliances underwent phenomenal expansion due to the rising income of the people.

Japanese industry has made continuous efforts to modernize production systems and facilities and to increase productivity. Japan is changing in the direction of a new industrial structure in which energy-saving industries and knowledge-oriented industries will occupy principal positions.

Japan is not blessed with plentiful natural resources. Coal has been replaced by petroleum and natural gas as an energy source. Thermal power generation now exceeds that of hydroelectric power.

The iron and steel industry plays a basic role in the nation's productive activities. However, mineral deposits in Japan are totally inadequate, so Japan's iron and steel industry depends heavily on imported iron ore and scrap.

Though the demand for labor has increased due to a rapid expansion of the economy, the labor supply has been limited because of a limited increase in population and a significant increase in the number of young adults going on to higher education. The growing labor shortage has resulted in increased wages.

Education

For several centuries prior to the 1800's, private schools called *terakoya* and other educational establishments were developed where reading, writing, and arithmetic were taught to a limited extent to children of commoners. In 1872 a modern public education system was established in Japan for the first time.

Before the turn of the century, vocational schools, normal schools, and preparatory schools had been added to the educational system. Three years later professional schools slightly below the university level were established. By 1920 more than 99 percent of school-age children were attending primary schools.

Standard education is now divided into four stages: elementary (six years, compulsory), junior high (three years, compulsory), senior high (three years), and institutions of higher education (normally four years).

Senior high education, as well as higher education in general provides courses of three types: full-time, part-time, and correspondence. Both part-time and correspondence courses lead to a diploma equivalent to that available to the full-time students.

Much of the general structure of the Japanese school system has been patterned after systems in the United States. The policy of students wearing a standard uniform in school was borrowed from European schools. Physical education is stressed in Japan. Japanese schools concentrate heavily on subjects such as physics, chemistry, the natural sciences, and foreign languages, chiefly English.

Institutions of higher education in Japan are classified into three types: colleges and universities, junior colleges, and technical colleges. Eighty-seven percent of Japanese children seek some schooling beyond their compulsory education.

It is very difficult for a Japanese high school senior to be accepted into a major college and so, since education means so much to them, they take their schooling very seriously. University studies are available for the few who win out through arduous and competitive entrance examinations. Competition for entrance into Tokyo University and Kyoto University is so fierce that the chance of being admitted to either of them on the first try is increasingly small. An ambitious student is likely to take the entrance examinations year after year rather than settle for a lesser university. Each year aging and weary freshmen enter Tokyo University after having waited five or six years for the honor. To the Japanese, however, the wait and the struggle must be worth the effort, because graduates from these universities take their pick of the top jobs each year.

In addition to the regular educational facilities, a variety of educational establishments provide young people with vocational and practical

courses, including dressmaking, cooking, bookkeeping, typing, automobile driving and repairing, and computer technology. Special schools provide for the physically and mentally handicapped.

Transportation

A highly developed mass-transit system of trains and buses is the principal mode of intracity transportation. Many people own cars. Traffic is heavy, and moves on the left side of the road.

Japan has a well-developed air, sea, and rail network, but its roads can hardly handle the almost overwhelming traffic. Traffic congestion contributes to an abundance of automobile accidents.

Railways constitute the main form of land transportation. The first railway in Japan was laid in 1872 between Tokyo and Yokohama. By 1930, a railroad network had spread to the four main islands.

The Japan National Railway operates three-fourths of Japan's 17,000 miles of railway lines, including all long-distance trunk lines. New lines and double tracks are constantly being added. Japan ranks first in the world in the number of passengers carried by railways. There are serious problems with overloading in the trains, especially on commuter lines.

Being an island nation, Japan is heavily dependent on water transportation. Japan owns a very large merchant marine fleet. A large percentage of all supertankers in the world have been constructed in Japan.

Domestic air services are operated by several air transportation companies. Air service is available in all major cities, with the Tokyo International Airport being one of the world's largest and busiest air terminals. Because of the fast expansion of international air service, airport facilities are heavily burdened.

Communication

In terms of number of newspapers, books, radio and television receivers, and movies, Japan holds a leading position in the world in mass communication media. This is due partially to the fact that Japan has a very high literacy rate and that only the Japanese language is spoken throughout the country. The prosperity of mass communication media also owes much to the engineering ingenuity of the Japanese.

In Japan, some thirty-seven million newspapers are sold each day. This represents the second largest daily newspaper circulation in the world. Almost every household subscribes to two daily newspapers, including the evening edition. Because Japan is relatively restricted in land area, three huge metropolitan newspapers distribute nationally and account for nineteen million copies each day. In any section of the country there are also the usual city and provincial newspapers.

Papers report the news in a straightforward and perceptive manner without government interference. The profession of journalism is admired in Japan and the talent of its members is high. What really sets Japanese newspapers apart is that no other country with freedom of public opinion has such a heavy concentration of influence in the public media. In recent years weekly magazines have become important and enjoy very large circulations as well.

Radio broadcasting was begun in Japan in 1924. Today there are nearly 900 government- or privately-owned radio broadcasting stations. The first telecasts were made in Japan in 1952, and in 1960 Japan became the second country in the world to start regular color television broadcasting. Today 87 percent of all households in Japan have television sets.

Television is exerting immeasurable influence, along with a stabilizing effect through its wide range of programs, on the social and cultural life of Japan. There is a heavy emphasis on educational broadcasting. Virtually all of Japan's schools are equipped with receivers, and both state and private broadcasters devote 20 percent of their time to educational programs.

The motion picture industry has recently declined due to the competition from television, and the number of cinema theaters has gradually decreased. Nevertheless, Japan is still the world's top motion picture-producing country.

Health facilities

Public health administration in Japan has developed remarkably in recent years, resulting in a significant extension of life expectancy, a sharp decrease in infant mortality, and a drastic reduction in incidence of infectious diseases.

Medical facilities have expanded every year. Nevertheless, regional distribution of medical personnel is unbalanced. The quality of nutrition has also improved considerably. Both the weight and height of young people show considerable increases over that of their parents.

The people

It is generally agreed that the Japanese people are a mixture of several racial strains. Predominantly they are of Mongoloid stock drawn in prehistoric times from the eastern fringes of the Asian mainland. Proto-Malayan and Polynesian strains migrated from the south by way of the Ryukyu Islands. The Ainu people of northern Japan are almost Caucasian in appearance and are considered to be the original inhabitants of the archipelago.

Japan is the seventh most populous nation in the world. About 75 percent of the Japanese people live in the cities. Of this urban population 58 percent are crowded into the "big three" metropolitan areas--Tokyo (population eleven million; the most populous city in the world), Osaka, and Nagoya. Medium-sized cities in local areas, including Sendai, Hiroshima, and Fukuoka, are also attracting people at a rapid rate. A growing number of Japanese are leaving the towns and villages of the countryside and moving to the big cities to take advantage of greater job opportunities and to enjoy the urban standards of living.

Japanese city life is, in many ways, as modern as that in any Western city. Most Japanese city dwellers live in towering apartment complexes, and rely upon subways and buses to transport them to work. There are still great contrasts between the traditional rural areas and the bustling cities.

The family

The modern trend is away from the tradition of large, multigeneration families. Families now are usually smaller, consisting of husband, wife, and one or two children.

To a Japanese his name and his family are important possessions. Any act that would shame the individual will shame the entire family. Any act that would honor the individual brings honor to the entire family.

Children are allowed great freedom in Japanese households. They are often seen riding buses and trains alone. On a train children are allowed to sit before anyone else. If the train is crowded people offer their seat to a child. Mothers will let their children sit while they stand. Despite this apparent liberty orderliness, cleanliness, manners, neatness, and respect for authority are emphasized at an early age. Disobedience is looked down upon with shame, the most horrible criticism to a Japanese.

Boys today are still favored over girls in Japanese society, and greater expectations are placed on them, especially the eldest son in the family. Japanese youths in urban areas display traits common to teenagers in other mature industrial societies, adopting unusual dress fads, distinctive speech, and peculiar recreation inclinations.

Within their own family group, elderly Japanese are usually much respected. In recent times, however, a notable tendency toward indifference and even neglect has been manifest toward the aging. It is considered shameful to place old people in rest homes. Grandparents live with the eldest son or grandson upon his marriage. The special, polite language is commonly used to address the aged, even those whom one does not know. The aged are considered a valuable source of wisdom and knowledge when moral and social issues arise, and their final word is usually respected as truth.

Although more of the aged make their own living until they die, it is common for their children to take responsibility for their physical and economical welfare beginning at about age fifty-five to sixty, or when the need arises. Most importantly, the elderly serve as the nucleus which now maintains the characteristic traditions of the Japanese culture. In fact, deference is shown to whoever is older in almost every relationship.

In Japan, dating is a recent phenomenon. Many young people are able to meet more freely and socially than at any time in Japan's history. Youth begin dating at age eighteen or nineteen, usually meeting at school or restaurants.

Marriage age is about twenty-five to twenty-seven for men. In the cities, couples often choose their own spouses without interference or arrangements on the part of the parents. Arranged marriages, although going out of style, are still practiced widely in Japan.Parents go through a mediator to acquire a suitable mate for their son or daughter. The son or daughter is obligated to date the prospective mate, but if they do not like each other they can refuse the arrangement. If they do like each other, the marriage will be taken care of by the families.

Marriage is ordinarily feted by banqueting, special costumes, and merrymaking. Daughters have traditionally been considered part of their husband's family after marriage. It is felt that the family must be preserved. For this reason if a man has all daughters the husband of his oldest daughter might agree to change his name to that of the wife to carry on the family name. This is not a rare occurrence.

Many urban Japanese live in high-rise apartments and earn enough to supply the family with

some luxuries. Sizable bonuses are usually given by employers twice a year, around July and December. The usual work week is Monday through Saturday morning. Entertainment is an important part of the Japanese city-dweller's life. Theaters, coffee shops, and restaurants attract many of these urban dwellers, including tourists.

About one-fourth of the Japanese people live in small farming communities. These villagers usually live in households that include grandparents and grown sons and their families as well as the farmer and his wife and family. Land is traditionally passed down to the eldest son, but others may inherit money or help their older brother work on the farm.

The responsibility of a farmer's family is primarily to work in the fields. Men spend long days plowing, planting, and harvesting their crops of rice. Most farmers tend to rely upon the old methods and harvest by hand, but modern small farm machinery is becoming more commonplace. In addition to attending to household chores and gardening, the women help their husbands in the fields. Older children take care of the younger ones with the aid of the grandparents, and often work in the fields..

Religion

Freedom of religion is guaranteed by the constitution. Traditionally 98 percent Buddhist and Shinto, Japan is now quite secularized, although some new religious/political movements have gained popularity in post-war years. Less than one percent of the population is Christian.

Shinto is purely a Japanese belief and has long been a symbol of nationalism and Japanese thought. Shinto embraces both nature and ancestor worship. Because of Shinto's close link with Japanese national identity it has been the tool for nationalism several times in Japanese history. Since World War II the number of active Shinto believers has fallen drastically, especially among the young. Shinto remains, however, through the great traditions of its festivals and celebrations. During the holiday season at New Year's many people make pilgrimages to local shrines

More than half of Japan's population claim to be Buddhist. Although this religion originated in India, Japan is considered one of the strongest Buddhist countries in the world. Transplanted from the Asian continent in the sixth century, Buddhism flourished in Japan and exerted considerable influence upon the Japanese way of life. Emphasizing quiet introspection and harmonious self-adjustment to the universe, it gradually blended with every aspect of Japanese life,including art, literature, architecture, music, and social mores and customs. Today there are about fifty different sects of Buddhism in Japan.

Since World War II, religion in Japan has taken on new forms. Some of the so-called "new religions" have gained prominence and power in Japan. Many of them involve nationalistic themes. Others are efforts to combine the "best" doctrines

of other religions of the world, including Christianity.

Language

Japanese is considered by many linguists to have one of the most complex systems of writing in the world. In ancient times Japanese scholars adapted the Chinese style of writing to their own tongue. This was very difficult because Japanese is a multisyllabic language with many verb inflections, and Chinese is a monosyllabic language (that is, one syllable per character) with virtually no verb inflections.

Today Chinese ideographs (*kanji*) are used along with two phonetic alphabets. One of these (*katakana*) is now used mainly for the many English and other foreign words adopted into the language; the other (*hiragana*) is used to express grammar and pronunciation of Japanese words and sentences.

Diet

Japanese prefer simple foods. They consume rice at almost all meals. Breakfast is often supplemented by *misoshiru* (a fish broth with soybean curds added) and *tsukemono* (a pickled vegetable). Lunch is a light meal and may consist of salted or raw fish and *tsukudani* (seafood or vegetables cooked and preserved in soy sauce). Supper generally includes rice, fish, pork, or chicken with vegetables.

Fish (tuna. crab, squid, etc.) even though often eaten raw, is prepared skillfully. Being somewhat bland when eaten alone, fish is dunked in sauces to add to its flavor.

The two most popular beverages in Japan are tea and *sake*, a rice wine. Tea is drunk during, after, and between meals. It is also served to guests with such snacks as *soba* (buckwheat noodles). *Sake* may be served before meals, and is also served on special occasions, such as weddings or holiday feasts. *Calpis*, a sweet-sour beverage fabricated from milk productes, is common. Coffee is also very popular. Soft drinks include Coca Cola and Fanta (orange and grape). Per capita consumption of alcohol in Japan rates high among

countries of the world. Drinking is not only a leisure and social pastime but also accompanies certain religious rites and ceremonies.

Sauces such as soy sauce, special salts, vinegars, spiced cucumbers or cabbage, and other herbal seasonings enhance the flavor of favorite Japanese dishes. Desserts most frequently consist of fruits and cakes. Japanese eat beef in small quantity, often cooking it with vegetables. The use of chicken, pork, and mutton is rather prevalent.

The arts

The Zen Buddhist emphasis on personal character and discipline and on a simple life close to nature, as well as its rejection of scholasticism, appealed to the medieval Japanese warrior because it fitted his need for inner stamina. Closeness to nature and the simplicity of things natural have most steadily influenced the art of Japan.

Indeed, it has been said that the ideals of the Japanese can be described by the two words "modesty" and "simplicity." Where modesty is a theme of human behavior, simplicity is the essence of the aesthetic. As might be expected, poetic harmony is reflected in the literature and even the language of Japan, resulting in the development of the art of poetic expression to a high level throughout Japanese history.

The simple matter of living is an art in Japan. Everyday tasks find their way into the spirit and beauty of living. One such task is flower arranging. It is taught in almost every neighborhood in Japan. Arrangements take their design from nature. Many times the arrangements express philosophical ideas. Always the arrangements are simple and natural.

Another daily custom which has become an art is the serving of tea. The tea ceremony is also taught in neighborhoods throughout Japan. It is the essence of beauty and grace in femininity. This ceremony also is the expression of nature and simplicity. The tea ceremony, however, is performed only on special occasions.

One traditional Japanese art form is painting on scrolls, known as *kakemono*. These hanging scrolls are usually of some object from nature or an example of calligraphy. The artists of the past thought that the things that were suggested but did not actually appear were as important as the things that did. For this reason Japanese art usually contains a great deal of space.

Other art forms which contain the essence of simplicity are pottery, *shodo* or the artful rendering of Japanese words with a brush, and gardening.

Traditional Japanese architecture is simple yet beautiful. Colors are natural. Wood is left unpainted, and floors are straw mats left in their natural wood frames.

Kabuki and *noh* are Japan's traditional theatrical arts. *Kabuki's* inception goes back to the latter part of the sixteenth century. It incorporated parts of all the preceding theater forms of Japan. Though not as flourishing as it once was, the *kabuki* theater retains a wide popularity among the people.

Noh is a very strictly regulated form of ancient drama using masks. The emphasis is on refined beauty and deep symbolism. Every movement of the performers is slowly and carefully executed with perfect discipline and self-control. Whereas *kabuki* is brightly colored and emotional, *noh* drama is refined, quiet, and formalistic. Both are adventures in dramatic style for the visitor.

Sports

It is somewhat paradoxical that the Zen influence which inspired awe for the natural beauty of a flower also inspired the martial arts of swordsmanship and hand to hand combat and the ethics of good soldiery. From Zen the *samurai* drew the strength required for his code of physical bravery and absolute loyalty. From these codes came the martial arts, which today are called sports.

Supplementing the traditional sports of Japan are Western games. Baseball appeared in Japan in the late nineteenth century and is now the most popular sport in Japan. Other favorite sports are soccer, volleyball, and basketball. Colleges and high schools actively compete in various sports. Autumn athletic meets are an annual highlight in every public school. The Japanese have come to love these sports as their own. They thrill to a close contest and cheer for their favorite with just as much enthusiasm as do their Western counterparts.

One amazing difference between the traditional sports of Japan and the Western imports is that the traditional sports don't involve team play. Individual contests with individual. However, strict devotion is given to the sport group one belongs to.

Purely traditional sports include *sumo*, *judo*, *kendo*, and *karate*. *Sumo*, the sport of giants, is an ancient style of wrestling. Two men meet in a small, circular, sand-covered arena and try to force each other either out of the ring or to touch the ground with some part of the body other than

the soles of the feet. Professional *sumo* is very popular in Japan.

Judo, long considered magic by some Westerners, is merely the art of the "soft way." *Judo* is a defense sport. The idea is to throw, flip, or trip the opponent.

"The way of the sword," *kendo* is the sport of the ancient *samurai*. In this form of Japanese fencing they use split bamboo sticks to represent the traditional *samurai* sword.

Karate means "empty hand." This sport was developed by the Okinawans, who were serfs to the Japanese and Chinese for many years in feudal times. The Okinawans were not allowed to have weapons so they developed a means of self-defense that required only use use of the "empty hand." Today *karate* is very popular as a sport in colleges and clubs. The Okinawans are still the masters of the sport.

Japanese also enjoy skiing, gymnastics, mountain climbing, boating, tennis, swimming, hockey, and cycling.

Communicating in Japan

As you anticipate an experience with a culture different than your own, you no doubt expect certain communication problems. The mistake most of us make is to assume that our problems in communication stem only from language differences, and that the problem can be resolved by appropriate language training.

However, verbal communication is only a portion of the total communicative process. There is mounting evidence that nonverbal cues, which are often too subtle to even be conscious, often communicate far more than words. So, considering communication in a broader sense, the difficulty is not limited to a verbal language barrier. Communication involves ideas, images, and symbolic meaning. Communication problems arise when the life experiences and cultures of the communicators are not the same. This is definitely true for the Japanese. In addition to verbal expression, the position, interests, and opinion of one party are judged by such factors as personal and professional backgrounds, mannerisms, emotional reactions, environment, and prior conduct.

The sections that follow will cover the following important facets of communication:

* How and why people think and act as they do
* The language itself
* Nonverbal communication
* Behavioral do's and don'ts
* "Survival signs" to read and understand
* Making daily interaction easier for you and the Japanese

A people to get to know

Apart from places to go and things to see, there are people to know in Japan. Communication goes much deeper than language. Behaviorisms, ways of thinking, and manners of living also relate to communication.

It is true that Japan has been described as a dualistic society: quiet and contemplative on one hand, aggressive and assertive on the other. It is also true that Japanese are more like Westerners than any of their Asian counterparts when it comes to concepts such as "goal orientation," "competitive work ethic," "progression," and "self-determination." But these concepts still have to be woven into the context of social behavior.

Japanese attitudes, values, and behavior vary considerably from those of Americans due to their own historical heritage. religious influences, and other factors which have been partly discussed previously. For example, Americans seem to believe that everyone can achieve success through hard work. Competition and aggressiveness are typical traits of Americans. They value action and mastery of the physical world. Japanese, on the other hand, view society and physical environment as a force to live with. Traditionally they were taught to accept their fate and to learn to have absolute tolerance for their trials. Desires must never become overbearing. Pride must never take the form of self-satisfaction and haughtiness.

Likewise, Americans consider laws to be universal and constant. They are not applicable in one situation and then not in another. Honest men never cheat or compartmentalize. Japanese

agree that to be dishonest would bring great dishonor to one's family. But ethics in Japan are situational. One law is not applicable to every circumstance.

In every culture certain feelings or assumptions such as these influence how the members of that culture act and determine what value they place on certain things and ideas. Descriptions of these feelings and assumptions are here called *themes*.

Themes are a way of discussing a culture using examples of behavior and attitudes. For example, Americans seem to believe that the most admirable trait is to do well in business and become wealthy. This theme is illustrated by the fact that Americans treat the wealthy men of their communities with the most respect. On the other hand, the Asian cultures seem to believe that the most admirable trait is wisdom, and respect those who are older, wiser or better educated.

Knowing the characteristic assumptions of a culture makes it possible to predict how the members of that culture will act in situations that involve the theme. For instance, Americans are a time-conscious people. They believe that promptness is very important and that tardiness is an indication of indifference and inefficiency.

Some people in the Far East may be confused by the American who always seems to be in a hurry, who expects others to be on time for appointments, and who apologizes for being a couple of minutes late.

A special exercise is used to illustrate these themes. First, a life-like situation is presented in which a foreign visitor is in a position that could prove frustrating or embarrassing to all involved. Inherent in each situation is an underlying way of thinking or doing (a theme) that is part of the Japanese culture. As you read each incident, identify the theme. Try to imagine the other circumstances in which it might occur.

Next, the theme will be discussed as it relates to cultural concerns. Finally, another situation and a variety of possible reactions will be described. Using what you have learned from your study, you are to choose one reaction. The various alternatives are then discussed.

Several significant general cultural themes found throughout Japan have been chosen. As you understand and apply these principles of communication, you will adjust to other situations more easily.

THEME I: "PLEASE PARDON MY HUMILITY"
THEME II: "LET ME OFF THE HONORABLE HOOK, PLEASE"
THEME III: "A SUGGESTION"
THEME IV: "GET THE PICTURE?"
THEME V: "THANKS, BUT NO THANKS"

Theme I

Please pardon my humility

This was Mr. Stevens' second day in Japan. He spent the day at the company offices becoming acquainted with his new responsibilities. Since his family had not yet arrived from the United States, he was looking forward to another lonely evening when Mr. Mori, an associate in the same department, invited him to dinner at his home. Mr. Williams, who shared Stevens' office, was also invited.

"You'll really enjoy this evening," said Williams as they were leaving the office. "The Japanese are wonderful hosts, and it doesn't take long to really love Japanese food. But look, Stevens, the Japanese act a little differently than we expect in some situations. When you've been here awhile you'll pick that up. But for tonight, just do as I do and everything will be okay."

-----that evening-----

"*Gomen kudasai*," Williams called from the porchway.

"*Hai, hai*. Come right in," Mori invited.

As Stevens moved forward to enter the house he felt a firm hand on his coat. Bewildered, he waited while Mori invited them three more times to enter. Finally Williams stepped forward. They took off their shoes and entered the home.

In the living room, Mori offered Stevens a cushion to sit on. Stevens reached to take the cushion, but a glance at Williams signaled that this was not the time to be seated. After further encouragement form Mori, Williams accepted the cushion and nodded to Stevens to take his.

Mrs. Mori entered with the food. "This looks delicious!" Stevens said enthusiastically. Williams gave Mrs. Mori a similar compliment in Japanese.

"Oh, no. This is nothing," said Mori. "Excuse us for having such a poor meal."

Stevens was confused, but Williams was smiling at Mr. Mori. "What kind of a game are they playing now?" he wondered.

Stevens was tempted to begin eating. But he remembered his previous attempts at American informality and restrained himself. He observed that Williams and Mori were once again playing some kind of "yes,no" game.

"Please, this is not good," said Mori, handing a bowl of rice to Williams, "but if you like. . . ."

"Well then, *itadakimasu* [I humbly partake]," said Williams. He accepted the bowl and nodded to Stevens. At this signal Stevens hesitantly accepted a bowl and began eating.

The meal was delicious, the host and hostess charming, and the conversation interesting, but Stevens felt uneasy all evening. He was certain he would do or say something at the wrong moment.

Modesty and reserve

The American is readily recognized by foreigners as the one with the ready smile and the "glad handshake." Americans are generally very direct in their approach to other people. They consider being forthright and outspoken a sign of honesty. They comfortably choose to speak frankly and directly, and do not feel that they are being unpleasant if they try to make themselves clearly understood. The average American also considers formality and protocol pompous and arrogant. He tends to call everyone by his first name, even on first meeting.

In Japan, however, attitudes of reserve comprise devices that guarantee inward privacy. Mr. Stevens is frustrated at the Japanese custom of *enryo* or "reserve," waiting for politeness' sake, holding back when you want to take. But it is very important to the Japanese.

You should show reserve when you enter a person's home. Do not enter on the first invitation, but wait until you have been asked several times, perhaps on the second or third time. Then remove your shoes and enter.

Do not accept readily anything offered to you and do not help yourself to anything. If you are offered a gift, thank the person and wait for one or two more offers before accepting it. Receive the gift with two hands. When invited to

a person's home it is proper to take a wrapped gift (a small cake or some fruit, for example). The store will wrap the gift for you. Offer it to the host. Do not be offended if he is hesitant to take it, just keep offering it.

When asking a favor, show restraint by begging forgiveness before asking the favor. When a Japanese pays you a compliment, which is a very frequent occurrence, you should either deny the compliment or bow your head in humility and thank him deeply.

These courtesies would be more expected of an American who speaks Japanese and is familiar with Japanese customs. A new visitor to the culture need not be preoccupied with strict formality. Though your efforts to follow Japanese custom will be appreciated, likewise, well-intentioned courtesy on your part will rarely be misunderstood if you use common sense and your best manners.

Mr. Stevens was also concerned about Mr. Mori's apparent inferiority complex ("This is very poor food, but if you like. . . ."). The fact was that the food was delicious and Stevens could not figure out why Mori belittled it.

For the Japanese everything that is "yours" is exalted, and everything that is "mine" is humble. This is the custom in all social situations and is represented by the various levels of language politeness as well.

Modesty takes different forms in Japan. A woman might cover her mouth while talking; a man might inhale after every sentence. Loud laughter and speech is offensive in public places such as trains, stores, and restaurants. Showing physical affection is also not accepted in Japan as it is in the United States. Putting your arms around someone, kissing, and so on, would shock a Japanese. Japanese do not have a custom of kissing their wives openly. It seems to them that kissing before their children or in public is shameful conduct. It is also unheard of to say spontaneously, "I love you."

The Japanese feel that "silence is golden." They do not think that words always work well in communicating with each other. They think that at times better communication can be gained not by words but by the communication of "heart to heart," or nonverbal communication.

Time to test yourself

You are dining with a Japanese family. Mr. Takamoto offers you a dish of *sashimi*, saying, "It's not very good, but if it is not too rude, please eat it." Try as you might, you haven't yet learned to like *sashimi*. What should you do?

1. Strongly disagree with Mr. Takamoto's demeaning comment about the food and go ahead and try to eat it anyway.
2. Explain to Takamoto that you do not like *sashimi*.
3. Say "Thank you," and then ignore the dish.

NOTE REASONS FOR YOUR RESPONSE. SEE BELOW FOR ANSWERS.

1. This is the best if you can possibly do it. In this situation you would respond as you would be expected in American society.
2. Although this might work, it would be awkward. Be careful. You should never agree with demeaning comments about the food.
3. Not so good, but the message will get through.

Theme II

Let me off the honorable hook, please

Bob was in charge of a task force at work. He wanted to organize the others who would assist him. He visited with each one to see if they could attend an orientation meeting after work. Mr. Tanaka seemed reluctant and mentioned he wasn't sure if he could make it or not.

"Now, Mr. Tanaka, this is very important. Will you be at the meeting?" Bob asked.

Tanaka smiled and said that he would come if he could.

"Come, Tanaka," Bob persisted. "You're a bachelor and surely can spare a few minutes. What are you doing after work that's so important?"

Tanaka was silent.

"Don't tell me you can't change your plans. This is really important," Bob continued. "You'll be there, won't you?"

Tanaka came to the meeting all right, but Bob noticed that thereafter he avoided him and arranged to deliver any messages through intermediaries. Bob was confused. "I wonder why Tanaka keeps avoiding me," he thought. "He's holding up his end of the project all right, but I wonder what rubbed him the wrong way."

Saving face

Bob was proud of how he got Tanaka to come to the meeting. But to a Japanese this pushing one into a corner is a matter of "face," or honor. You do not put anyone in a position in which he might lose "face."

Anciently, the warrior class, the *samurai*, had a code of honor or law that no gentleman could lose his honor. To protect his honor the *samurai* was given several "privileges" not available to the common man. One was *kirisute gomen*, the right to execute those over whom they ruled if their will was opposed. This action could be carried out on any person of less than *samurai* rank without trial or question. Another privilege was that of *harakiri*, or the formal ceremony of suicide. This was always a means of clearing one's name of a dishonorable deed, or of protest, or of saving oneself from shame.

Today the *samurai* code does not exist, but the idea of saving face does. The Japanese have today an unwritten law that states, "Thou shalt not put thy brother to shame." Several devices are used to protect the honor of the Japanese.

The invasion of privacy by using direct questioning is also very offensive in Japan. Such questions as, "Do you smoke? What were you doing? Why do you not want to come? or Where have you been?" will be received very negatively.

While in Japan, do not force a person to make an appointment with you if it is obvious that he does not want to. The cues will be obvious as soon as you start to push. The Japanese will avoid making you lose face by not turning you down flat, but their true feelings will be apparent if you will be sensitive to them. Once you find that a person is not interested, try to break the conversation on as polite a note as possible. Trying to get in a final "cut" or two merely makes you appear foolish to the Japanese.

Do not argue with a person or force him to take one side of an argument. Some Japanese may appreciate this kind of intellectual contest, but the average Japanese does not understand this type of behavior. The American practice of attempting to influence people through words is not a Japanese pattern.

You may also become exasperated by Japanese vagueness. The Japanese purposefully make their conversation open-ended to avoid being cornered. *To omoimasu* [I think] might be as strong a statement as you will ever hear.

Often a Japanese will say nothing, waiting for you to fill in the blank or guess what he is thinking. This will occur also when he is uncertain or indecisive. If the answer is obvious you might want to save yourself some time, but avoid being too persistent and rude when this happens.

The Japanese language is structured often so that the person who is being spoken to will have to agree. Also, the term *kekko desu* [That's fine] can mean both "yes" and "no," depending on the inflection. In addition, many nonverbal cues convey very important messages.

One other face-saving device is modesty. This was discussed in detail in Theme I. The American pattern of communication is to "push" through one's own views. Japanese communication is predicated upon "pulling" out the other person's views through intuition. It assumes that a group of people should be able to perceive each other's views without direct expression.

The Japanese live by the rule, "Don't do unto others what you would not have them do unto you." Therefore, if you wish to learn the proper manner of dealing with people in Japan, be sensitive to the way in which they deal with you. Do not be so naive as to believe that your way is the best, especially in the area of direct questioning.

Time to test yourself

A Japanese student who is trying to learn English approaches you on the train. His English is obviously poor and you have a terrible time understanding him. Obviously your Japanese is better than his English. What should you do?

1. Try to ignore him.
2. Speak back to him in Japanese and tell him you do not understand his English.
3. Try to talk to him in English, even though he does not understand a word.
4. Speak a few simple phrases in English and then strike up a conversation in Japanese.

NOTE REASONS FOR YOUR RESPONSE. SEE BELOW FOR ANSWERS.

1. Of course not.
2. No, do not be so abrupt.
3. This may be a good plan if you have a little time to spend helping him.
4. This is quite acceptable. To answer a person in Japanese that speaks to you in English is an insult. Avoid giving offense by speaking English to those persons who believe they have some ability in English. This does not mean that you have to converse entirely in English, but a few well-chosen complimentary phrases are very courteous. However, to then turn the conversation entirely to Japanese will frustrate the student's purpose: to practice English.

In a more formal situation, such as a business encounter in which adequate communication is essential, much tact would be required. If you speak a little Japanese and have difficulty understanding the English spoken by a business contact or colleague, to simply say "I don't understand your English," would be offensively abrupt. You might simply ask the Japanese person to repeat what he said, or you could modestly mention that you are also trying to learn Japanese and that perhaps you could communicate in both languages as needed.

Theme III

A suggestion

Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler were visiting shops in downtown Osaka. As they were browsing in one of the many small shops of doll-makers, Mr. Wheeler stopped to converse with a man who was busy with dolls in various stages of development.

"Do you make these dolls by hand?" he asked the man.

"Yes. It's an art that has been in my family for years," the doll-maker replied.

"You are certainly very good at it."

"Thank you very much, but they really are very poorly done."

"Not at all! Why many Americans would love a doll like this."

Suddenly Mr. Wheeler had an idea. "Have you ever considered doing this by automation? I'll bet you would be able to increase your business a hundred percent."

"No. I had not considered that," said the man, and returned silently to his work.

Wheeler could sense he had offended the man. "I thought my idea was rather good," he commented to his wife as they left the shop.

Traditionalism

A Japanese anecdote explains that when given a problem, such as opening a tin can, the Japanese will take the can opener that has been used for centuries and master the technique; but the American will try to invent an easier way or a new tool for opening cans. This anecdote expresses the different points of view the two cultures have toward tradition. To the Japanese, crafts are arts, and the methods employed are hundreds of years old. The doll maker would no more abandon his art form for automation than would an artist use a printing machine to do his painting.

Because of the traditional nature of Japanese society, the methods and ideas of the past are honored and relied upon. Japanese also honor the master. In flower arrangement, athletics, writing, or any skill, the master is shown great respect. In addition, age is given much more deference in Japan than in America.

Such values are not unique to Japan. In most societies it would be an insult to any true artist to suggest automating work he is proud to do by hand. The Japanese do, in fact, produce many so-called "crafts" by automation. Mr. Wheeler's mistake was in not differentiating between a mass-produced "craft" and an art form in which the workman was proud to express his unique talent.

Time to test yourself

TRUE or FALSE

1. A Japanese would pay greater respect to an eighty-year-old teacher of flower arranging than to a college student with a high grade-point average.
2. A Japanese would not necessarily be concerned with protocol in a diplomatic setting.
3. Teachers are more revered than inventors.
4. Movies are more enjoyed than stage plays.
5. There are few holidays in Japan that have not originated hundreds of years before.
6. Japanese no longer wear the traditional dress, the kimono.
7. Even though the society is traditional, the ritualistic behavior of the Japanese in social situations (speaking humbly to others of higher social rank, visiting others' homes, etc.) is dying out.

NOTE REASONS FOR YOUR RESPONSE. SEE NEXT PAGE FOR ANSWERS.

1. TRUE, generally. They would use the term *sensei*, teacher or master, a term of true respect and admiration.

2. FALSE. Protocol is as much a part of Japanese life as rice.

3. TRUE. *Sensei* or teacher is a venerated position. Inventors would be respected if their invention was respected.

4. FALSE. Japanese love both. *Kabuki*, the traditional stage art, has been carried down through the ages. Attending *kabuki* theater is a rare treat. When a troupe travels, tickets are sold out well in advance of their arrival. However, movies are shown all over Japan and, partly because of their availability, are very popular.

5. TRUE. Most holidays have long histories.

6. FALSE. For holidays and special occasions the Japanese don the kimono. At home both men and women wear a lightweight kimono-style robe (*yukata*) in the summer.

7. FALSE. Though it is true that many urban Japanese have adopted Western customs and can be said to be "less traditional," most still feel the social traditions to be critical.

Theme IV
Get the picture?

Marilyn needed some film for her "special" camera. She went with her friend to a camera shop where she was sure she could find some.

"I'm so sorry, but we don't carry film for that camera," said the proprietor.

"But it's a Japanese camera!" Marilyn explained impatiently.

"You bought that camera in America, didn't you?"

"Yes, but the camera was made right here in Japan," Marilyn repeated loudly.

"Hmmm, I don't know," said the proprietor, calmly taking a closer look at the camera. "You see, this camera was made for export only, so I'm afraid you won't be able to obtain film for it anywhere in Japan."

Angrily Marilyn stalked out, dragging her friend with her.

Passiveness

The Japanese proprietor was having a few thoughts of his own. A Japanese would never had acted as Marilyn did. This aggressive behavior so admired in the Western world is very foreign to the Japanese. They believe that it is foolish to become angry and show emotions. If they do become aroused, it will be manifested in so subtle a manner that unless one has great command of the language and is very sensitive to his surroundings, he will not notice.

Ancient thinkers and religious figures expressed the idea of passive resistance and acceptance through the Taoist tenet of *wu wei* [not doing]. They reasoned that the power of one who "does nothing" is like water, which takes the shape of any container, or the air, which fills the immensity of the universe.

For example, if three persons were in a room and two began to argue, who would make the final decision in the argument? The two arguing would eventually prevail on the third to make the decision. The two would abide by his arbitration and all he had to do to gain such a position was to do nothing.

This trait, to accept the world as it unfolds, shows up in other forms, all of which seem foreign to Americans. Japanese people try hard not to show their emotions. They do not use aggressive action in pursuing a goal. They would rather negotiate a settlement than fight. Human relationships seem more important than winning.

Rarely will the Japanese transfer schools once accepted, and they try not to ever transfer jobs. (See Theme VI.) Japanese will not respond to suggestions involving efforts to change their situation. They are "stoic" or fatalistic in their attitudes about tragedy, and tend to be obedient about commands that come from higher authorities.

It seems fair to add, however, that this trait of passive acceptance is slowly being de-emphasized in the minds of some young Japanese. Even so, you will talk to many young people in Japan who espouse this attitude of nonaggressive behavior.

When in Japan, you should not try to force your feelings on someone else. Do not confuse aggression for enthusiasm. Your aggressiveness will offend the Japanese if it is not curbed.

In conversation a Japanese will sometimes respond by not saying anything. A long moment of silence may result. Try to wait until he speaks, or, if you do choose to break the silence, do it in a nonaggressive manner.

Time to test yourself

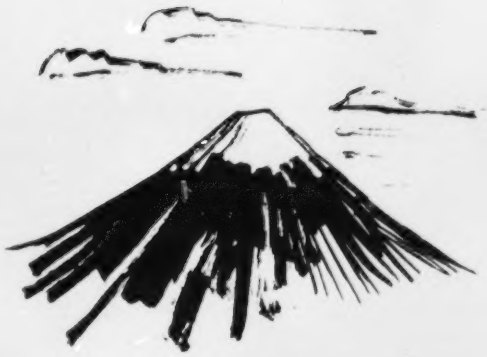
You are in a hurry and you want to buy a ticket to the next town on a train. But when you try to buy the ticket the man in the ticket booth tells you that the tickets are all sold out. Choose the best course of action.

1. Ask for another train.
2. Ask to see this man's boss and prevail upon him to get you a ticket.
3. Bribe the ticket seller.
4. Explain how desperately you need the ticket. If you are insistent enough, he will give in eventually.

NOTE REASONS FOR YOUR RESPONSE. SEE BELOW FOR ANSWERS.

1. This is the most likely alternative.
2. It would be practically impossible for a ticket seller to take time for something like this in busy Japanese train stations. Anyway, this would seem very selfish and inconsiderate of you.
3. This will not work in Japan.
4. It's doubtful this will work. Try calling beforehand next time. Many train schedules are computerized.

Theme V
Climbing Mt. Fuji



"I know the doctrines of my church are true," said the missionary. "Now that I have explained them to you, Mr. Suzuki, how do you feel?

"I believe in those things you have taught me," said Mr. Suzuki.

"Now, do you think all of these other sects can be true, too?

"Yes. Why not? You see, I am Buddhist. I believe that the road to God is like climbing Mt. Fuji. You may take one path, the path of Christianity, and I may take another, the path of Buddhism, but eventually we will both arrive at the summit."

Situational ethic

In the Western world there must be symmetry, pattern, and organization in music, art, and theology. Christian missionaries have mistakenly assumed that the Japanese are bound by "universal" concepts of law, logic, and order. They may believe that a person either accepts a principle or he does not, and that he repudiates all concepts which contradict those he accepts.

In Japan, however, one can be Buddhist, Shintoist, and Christian at the same time. Often Christian converts retain their Buddhist altars and and continue the practice of offering prayers to their deceased loved ones. This they do with no feeling of guilt or disloyalty.

All philosophic thought is also viewed as part of a cosmic whole that may include apparent contradictions without disturbing the conscience of any.

Time to test yourself

You drop your wallet in a crowded train station. A young man chases you for quite a distance to return it to you. What do you assume?

1. This man is honest and can be trusted without doubt.
2. He is expecting a tip.
3. This gesture was an honorable one, but you still know nothing about the other character traits of the man.

NOTE REASONS FOR YOUR RESPONSE. SEE BELOW FOR ANSWERS.

1. Not to be assumed.
2. Very unlikely.
3. Yes. You know what this specific action indicates. But it alone tells you nothing about other values or attitudes of this young man.

Theme VI

Thanks, but no thanks

"I'm greatly honored for your consideration of my skills, Mr. Paxman," said Mr. Sakai, "but I prefer to remain with my present employer."

Mr. Paxman was very discouraged as he left the bank. Mr. Sakai was the third man he had approached today and none of them had accepted.

Paxman was opening an accounting firm in Nagoya. In addition to some recent college graduates, he was anxious to hire experienced men to supervise the company. His neighbor, an American banker, had given him the names of several qualified men who were then working for other financial institutions. "But don't get your hopes up," he had cautioned. "The Japanese like to stay put."

But Paxman had felt confident he could convince several of them to join his firm because he could offer a considerable increase in salary and other benefits.

Visiting with Mr. Nagata, Paxman had been impressed with his abilities. He felt certain this man would accept his invitation to join the new company. But Nagata's response was the first of many similar reactions to his offer of a better position and higher wages. Nagata had been grateful for being thought capable of filling the new position, but did not wish to change employers.

Now, after his third rejection, Paxman was very confused. "What kind of a hold do employers have on people here?" he wondered. "Why should anyone feel so obligated to a job that he would refuse all other opportunities to improve his financial position?"

Nonindividualism in a vertical society

Oriental philosophy views existence as a whole made up of many parts, rather than as a conglomerate of many individuals. Man is one with the universe. Because identification with natural and social harmony is a watchword in Japanese life, nonindividualism is perhaps the most basic attitude in Oriental philosophy.

Japanese society is based on a common situational position rather than the attributes of the individual. This is very different from the United States, where organizational structure tends toward an emphasis on cooperation among equals: committee action, family togetherness, and equalitarianism. In Asia, where social stratification has been the rule for many centuries, meaningful relationships as well as patterns of thought have been more vertical and authoritarian.

Groups are the most important units in Japanese society. The individual is important only through the prestige of the group with which he is affiliated. He gives up a certain amount of individual identity to the group. In addition to associations at work, a large part of Japanese social life is affiliated with organized groups--

school classes, athletic groups, professional organizations, and even the family. All that are seen as beneficial accomplishments in Japan come about through established groups. Many Japanese will wear a pin representing their affiliations.

This emphasis on collective participation is reflected in the stability and permanence Japanese expect from the groups with which they identify. The group involvement must be a reciprocal relationship.

Traditionally the roles in society that deserve the greatest respect are: (1) the emperor, (2) one's father, and (3) one's teacher. This pattern of relationships reached its height in feudal days of lords and their retainers. Any role in modern-day society that can be compared to any of these traditional roles is a definite choice for loyalty.

A company president is said to be in the *oyabun* or "parent role" of the relationship. In like manner the employee is called the *kobun* or "child role" of the relationship. To illustrate, the *oyabun* does all he can to make sure his employees are housed, happy, and well off in every respect. He may even take steps to find a single employee a mate, or help one of his employee's children get into a special school. In return for the fulfilling of his role, the *kobun* feels a great deal of loyalty and dedication toward the employer.

A Japanese employee, for example, will usually not transfer from one company to another, even for higher wages or greater prestige. When calling on the representative of a business firm,

you will create a favorable impression if you present him with a card with your name on it. These are called *meishi* and are extremely popular in dealing with people in Japan. Always give your card to the senior man first. Notice the title of your contact. If it looks impressive, tell him.

The nonindividualism theme is one reason why family bonds are much stronger in Japan than in the West. In the United States, when a young couple marry they want to "make it on their own." But in Japan a young woman marries into the already-existing family, and the couple may live with the parents of the husband. This custom is slowly dying out except in rural communities.

In education, so much emphasis is placed on the name of the school attended that students wait for years to attend the top public universities, because graduation from one of them is a sure guarantee of success and wealth.

When placed in an internatonal environment a Japanese is extremely conscious of his identity as a Japanese. Never say or do anything to belittle Japan.

Time to test yourself

Your firm is opening a branch office in Fukuoka. You have been sent to arrange for office space. Your colleague is making some preliminary contacts with Japanese businessmen who, it is hoped, will join the firm when it opens. He talks to two men who have moved from other parts of the country and are looking for a secure position in a new company. They seem interested and qualified, but your colleague reports that they cooled considerably when they learned you had reserved only two suites of a downtown building for company offices. What can you do?

1. Offer them a larger salary and a few other special benefits.
2. Emphasize the opportunities and prestige available to them through their employment in a prominent American company.
3. Forget about them and look for people who are not concerned about the details of company location and management.
4. Consider locating an entire building for use by the company. An investment in real estate will create a sense of solidarity and stability.

NOTE REASONS FOR YOUR RESPONSE. SEE BELOW FOR ANSWERS.

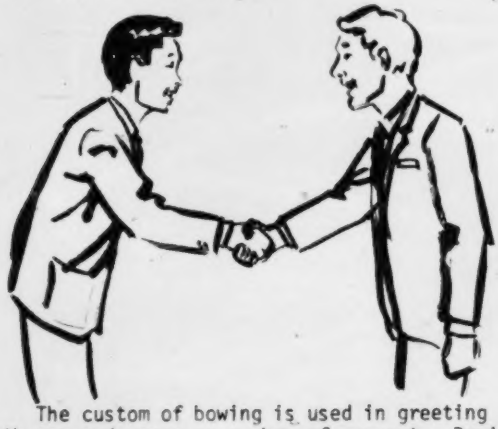
1. Japanese look for more than material promise in their employment. The success and satisfaction they receive is based on the group with which they are associated--in this case, the business firm that employs them. Before joining your company, they will determine whether it will be "profitable" as a lifetime employer to whom they can pledge their loyalty, regardless of financial remuneration.
2. Although Japanese tend to be very friendly toward the United States, it is presumptuous to suppose that "the prestige of a United States company" will be sufficient to influence a prospective employee to join your firm. Even more important than the distinction of a company is the promise of permanence and security.
3. You'll be hard pressed to find Japanese who aren't concerned about the reliability of their employer. Some United States organizations appear "temporary" to them--U.S. personnel are changed frequently; the company is headquartered in a few rented suites. Companies will gain who can make an initial investment that will help them appear well-established and permanent.
4. Stability is important to Japanese. They need to feel your company is firmly established. You must assure your employees of their permanence in your company. Companies which can afford to own an entire building rather than rent one or two floors will win the confidence of Japanese job-seekers. Remember, you can expect unwavering loyalty from your employees only if you reciprocate with a guarantee of permanent employment with your organization.

When is a wave goodbye a wave goodbye?

As you prepare for your experience in Japan, you may think that you can get along with hand signals and other gestures until you learn to speak the new language. Unfortunately, there are few facial expressions that mean exactly the same thing throughout the world. In some countries there are similarities to gestures and expressions used by Americans. However, most likely you will find your natural communication cues being misunderstood or misinterpreted. Of course, Japanese are very tolerant of the ignorant *faux pas* of foreigners. Still, you are more likely to be accepted by the people of Japan if you conform to some of their more important customs. Effective intercultural communication includes the following items.

Greetings

Japanese greetings are characterized with what would seem to an American to be extremes of politeness and formal ritual. Today both traditional and modern customs intermingle. Japanese people, enjoying an era of prosperity, tend to favor modern informaltiy.



The custom of bowing is used in greeting both men and women as a show of respect. During or after a slight bow, a handshake is common. When someone bows to you, you should acknowledge it by bowing back.

The Japanese value manners and politeness. Much care is taken to avoid embarrassing anyone either privately or before a group. Great respect is paid to elders, superiors, and strangers met for the first time. Strangers may exchange name cards.

Different forms of address represent the degrees of politeness and familiarity used by the Japanese. A plain style is employed among friends. A polite style is used when conversing with strangers. A deferential style, showing honor and respect, is often applied to parents, older people, officials, and teachers.

Visiting

When visiting, shoes are removed before stepping up inside the main part of a Japanese-style home. (Western-style buildings are entered with shoes on.) Shoes are arranged together pointing toward the outdoors. Slippers are usually worn inside Japanese-style homes and buildings, but should be removed before entering rooms with traditional straw-mat floors.

Reserve and modesty are traditionally emphasized. When offered something, one always hesitates to accept. Excessive compliments on items of decor are avoided by guests. Otherwise, the host may feel obligated to give them as gifts. Gifts are accepted and given with both hands and a slight bow. Compliments are denied graciously.

The people of Japan love to give one another presents. If making a social call, the visitor may bring a gift colorfully wrapped. The giving of presents dates back to an ancient custom called *noshi*, where dried fish, prepared in a prescribed manner, were presented at shrines and also given to friends.

Eating

Upon arrival at a Japanese home, a guest is offered tea as a token of hospitality. The host serves the beverage with a snack such as fresh fruit or crackers.

Eating on the street or while standing is considered to be in poor taste. When eating, the bowl is brought to chest level, and one eats from it while holding it instead of bending down to it on the table.

Food should never be passed from the chopsticks of one person to those of another, nor should chopsticks ever be stuck straight up in a bowl of rice. These practices are reminiscent of the Buddhist funeral ceremony.

A person covers his mouth when yawning or when using a toothpick. Unless one eats the last grain of rice from his bowl, it is a signal to the host that another helping is wanted.

Japanese are not accustomed to talking about serious matters at the dinner table. They perfer to visit in smaller groups in a more relaxed manner. Too much talking when eating is considered bad taste.

Gestures

In a formal situation, such as a meeting, all yawns are stifled. Erect posture while sitting on a chair, with both feet on the floor,is proper. When crossing the legs in an informal manner (if seated in a chair), one knee should be placed directly over the other.

Some Japanese homes have a room with Western-style furniture where they welcome foreign visitors. In many homes, however, guests will sit on the straw-mat floor. When invited to sit, one should kneel down, resting the body on the heels. The host will then urge you to "make yourself comfortable." Men may then sit with their legs crossed in front, tailor-fashion (ankles crossed and knees spread apart). Women bend their legs to one side and support the body with one arm.

To beckon someone, the palm is turned down and the fingers waved.

Punctuality

It used to be that tardiness was unacceptable. Today things have changed and in some instances it is unwise to be on time.

Students experience rather harsh punishments when late, but Japanese people go to parties late because they fear they will appear too anxious to make a special impression.

Traffic in Japan offers a logical and convenient excuse for lateness. The Japanese will frequently find it hard to find room on public transportation. Thus today it is acceptable to offer excuses for tardiness, a practice not condoned a generation ago.

General courtesies

* Do not lose your temper in front of a Japanese.

* Do not ask a person direct questions such as "What are you going to do?" or "Why not?" unless he can be considered a close friend.

* Do not try American sarcasm translated into Japanese unless you are sure that you can explain to a Japanese why this is supposed to be funny, because they will probably not understand. Puns are a popular form of wit in Japan, perhaps because of the large number of homonyms in the Japanese language.

* Be careful when offering your seat to a woman or opening a door for her. It is courteous for a gentleman to offer his seat to an older person or a pregnant woman, but may be questionable with a young girl.

* Be humble and modest when someone compliments you.

* Avoid being loud and conspicuous in public.

* Be careful in accepting favors from Japanese people. They might give you an expensive gift in return for specific favors on your part. This is not to say, however, that you should be suspicious every time someone offers you help. The Japanese people pride themselves on being a very hospitable people. But they do have a very complex set of obligations concerning favors.

* Always acknowledge a favor done by someone or hospitality received the next time you meet.

* Do not use colloquial Japanese in an attempt to show off unless you are sure that your Japanese is perfect. (By the way, even in two years it will not be.)

Plaid pants, sport shirt, hat, camera and shades

You are dressed in your "travel duds" and plan to buy a beautiful Japanese picture scroll before you fly home.

Sound exciting? It should be. However, if you are not familiar with Japanese shopping procedures, you may find yourself lost, especially in cities outside the major ones. There are differences in just about every aspect of Japanese life. A glance through this section will help you plan your time, avoiding harrassment by "the little things."

Telephone

The Japanese say "Moh-shee, Moh-shee" when they answer the telephone. This means essentially, "I'm listening." Public telephones are easily accessible in Japan. They are usually colored red. In fact, the colloquial word for public telephone is *akaderwa* (red phone). Many homes and all offices have telephones, although installation costs are high and often the waiting list is long for new telephones.

Telephone operation and etiquette are basically the same as in the United States. An important thing to remember when someone is talking to you on the phone is to say "Hai" (yes) every time they pause. The pauses are intentional and this response is an appropriate way of letting them know that you are listening.

Postal service

Postal service is little different from that in the United States. Post boxes are red and usually labeled both in English and Japanese. Stamps (*kee-teh*) are available in post offices.

When Americans address an envelope they write:

(name) Warren Smith
(street number) 1803 South Pershing
(city, state) Hinsdale, Illinois

The name is written:

Alice Ashton
(given name) (family name)

When Japanese address an envelope they write:

(prefecture/state) 島根県
(city) 松江市矢田町
(number) 14 - 562
(name) 橋本太郎

The name is written:

田中 二郎
(family name) (given name)

Eating out

Etiquette for eating in public is similar to that which is appropriate in the United States. Often dessert is served first unless otherwise requested. Knife and fork are always available, but chopsticks are more fun.

A word of advice: It may take a few times to get used to some Japanese foods, but soon(er than you think) they become your favorites. Try to eat the foods just as your hosts do--with the same sauces, etc.

Shopping

There is no haggling over prices in department stores. Japanese department stores are among the largest, most elaborate, the most modern in the world. Even an American visitor can very easily get the "babes in toyland" feeling when exploring inside these superstores. Most have many underground levels, with complete amusement parks on the roofs for children.

Additionally, every neighborhood has its marketplace, consisting of many small shops. One shop may sell vegetables, another deal in fish, and so on. The super-department stores are

magnificent and luxurious palaces of special purchases, while these marketplaces deal with the everyday business of the common people.

O-furo: the bath

The Japanese enjoy themselves in many ways, but no other form of recreation compares with having a bath (*o-furo*). The traditional bathing ritual in Japan is performed to relax and soak the body, not to cleanse it. Bath time is a convivial occasion. People relax together in steaming hot water: 104° to 110°F. The water, kept constantly heated, is thought to protect and preserve the bathers' health.

It is common to see two or more people taking baths together in public bathhouses (*sento*). The country is covered with numerous hot springs which attract bathers from all parts. Many city dwellers use public bath houses.

A farm family's bathtub, made of cedar or earthenware, is located in a special bathhouse or in the kitchen near the stove. A fire kindled beneath the tub keeps the water warm.

Bathing in an *o-furo* is very different from bathing in the good old tub at home. A person does not enter a bathing pool without first cleansing the body at individual faucets located around the pool. Because the Japanese standard of modesty differs from that of Americans, the private parts of the body should be covered. It is not uncommon for an entire family to enjoy an evening bath, but more often they bathe one at a time. The father rinses first, and then each family member in turn.

Almost every neighborhood has a public bath The principle is the same as the one in homes, but the men and women are strictly separate. Only in hot spring resort areas or sometimes in hotels do men and women bathe together.

Japanese homes

In rural areas, most Japanese live in small, one-story homes with three to six rooms. Sliding paper screens form partitions between rooms. Straw mats cover the wooden floors. Furniture is modestly simple, and few pieces are used. Most rooms have a nook in one wall in which a scroll or print hangs with a flower arrangement in front of it. People seat themselves on cushions. Thick heavy quilt-like material is spread out on the floor to serve as beds.

The love of nature plays an important part in decor. Most Japanese homes have a small garden which is a miniature landscape. In the warm months, the doors of the home slide open to bring the garden into view.

Japanese houses were traditionally heated by charcoal burned in a ceramic *hibachi*, although now portable gas or electric heaters are used most widely. In large urban centers homes may be centrally heated by gas or oil, but this is the exception. Often, Japanese who live in cities occupy high-rise apartments or condominiums. City homes frequently are Western-style, similar to those of the United States.

Weddings

Many marriages in Japan are still arranged by the parents. Tradition teaches that genuine, lasting love comes after marriage. Although American-style weddings are often the fad, parents are still usually consulted about marriage decisions.

Most Japanese weddings are Shinto weddings. The bride dresses in the traditional kimono. Her clothing has much interesting symbolism. For instance, the garment-changing ceremony has special significance. The first garment is white, which symbolizes a new life. The second garment, a ceremonial dress, ties the bride to the ancestral and religious duties of the home. The third garment is the working garment of an upper-class housewife. The groom generally wears a tailcoat, striped pants, and a formal silk tie.

The *sansankudo* part of the ceremony, the sharing of three cups of rice wine between the bride and the groom, completes the wedding rites.

A wedding feast at the home of the groom's parents or a rented hall follows the ceremony. The marriage itself is not legally recognized until officially registered in the family records.

Funerals

The deceased is bathed, and his or her hair is sometimes ceremonially shaved off. Next, the deceased is dressed in white, and then placed in a coffin in which cremation takes place.

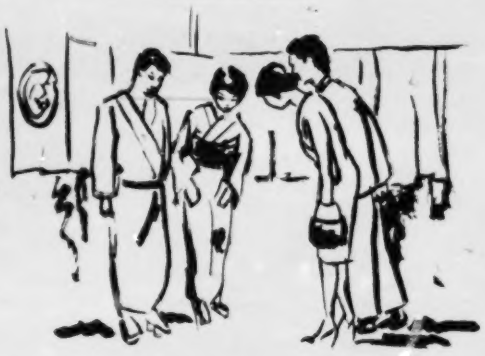
A Buddhist funeral is conducted at a crematory or temple. Cremation is encouraged by law because it is sanitary, limits the spread of disease, and conserves land--an important consideration in Japan. Ashes and large bone fragments are placed in a small bin or square container and sanctified by a priets.

At the conclusion of the funeral rites, a

paper is posted on door posts to inform strangers of a death in the household. People often bring money in an envelope for the family. Notes of thanks and reciprocal gifts are sent later.

Dress

The traditional Japanese clothing is the kimono. This long, loose robe of cotton or silk is tied around the waist with a sash. For relaxing at home the Japanese usually wear a simple, light-weight cotton kimono-style robe. Both men and women may wear *geta*, wooden sandals built on two- or three-inch high blocks. Most people, however, prefer to be seen in Western-style clothing outside the home. Clothing styles and colors are conservative by American standards.



School girls wear uniforms of blue skirts and middy blouses, and boys wear a type of dark blue or black uniform with a cap. Farmers and poorer city workers dress in cotton pants and jackets. Besides wearing leather shoes and the *geta*, they may wear flat sandals made of wood or woven straw. At home the Japanese usually wear only stockings (often with slippers) and *yukata* (informal kimono). Outside footwear is always removed before entering the home's interior.

Holidays and festivals

Holidays and festivals in Japan are celebrated with almost universal excitement and vivid colors. All homes are decorated; everyone inside celebrates.

The biggest celebration is New Year's, lasting from January first to January third. The streets blossom with the vivid colors of traditional kimonos worn by the thousands of people going to visit local shrines during these New Year's days. All shops are closed January first and everywhere there is visiting, exchanging gifts, sipping *sake*, and sampling rice cakes.

O-bon, in mid-July or August is another national holiday time commemorating the spirits of ancestors. Most people are not Christians, but follow Christian customs on Christmas Day.

Many local and regional festivals are celebrated throughout the year. Other holidays include: Adults' Day (January 15), National Foundation Day (February 11), Girls' Day (March 3), Vernal Equinox, Emperor's Birthday (April 29), Golden Week (April 29-May 5), May Day (May 1), Constitution Day (May 3), Children's Day (May 5), Star Festival (July 7), Senior Citizens' Day (September 15), Autumnal Equinox, Physical Culture Day (October 10), Culture Day (November 3), Shichi-go-san Festival (November 15), Labor/Thanksgiving Day (November 23), and Omisoka (December 31).

Sign language

An excellent way to orient yourself in a new culture is to become familiar with the many signs you see. Until you learn to ask the location of the nearest restroom, it might be helpful to at least be able to recognize the sign.

It also helps you to find clean air and to stay away from dangerous areas. Even if you can't speak the language, you can walk around looking like you know where you are going and what you are doing.

ENGLISH	JAPANESE
Restroom	御手洗
Men	男
Women	女
Entrance	入口
Exit	出口
Danger	危険
No Smoking	禁煙
Bus stop	バスのりば
Beauty salon	美容院
Barb shop	理髪店
Bank	銀行
Post office	郵便局
Train station	駅
Taxi	タクシー
Film	フィルム

Breaking language barriers

If you cannot speak other peoples' languages, you are terribly handicapped in communicating with them. Because language is the most important communication tool in any society, it is possibly the area of your greatest security. You will come into the whole new world of Japan where you may not know the Japanese language at all. You will be stripped of your primary means of interacting with others.

Your purpose and length of stay in Japan will determine the language proficiency you will need or desire. Language training is available through schools, self-study, and various language booklets written especially for travelers.

In case you find yourself with no other materials, this "survival" section can assist you in communicating in Japanese. The following are simple words and phrases to master:

ENGLISH	JAPANESE PRONUNCIATION
Good day	KOH-nee-chee-wah
Good evening	kohm-BONG-wah
My name is...	(name) -dess
What is your name?	oh-nah-my-WAH?
I am happy to meet you.	DOH-zoh yoh-ROHSH-koo
Please	oh-neh-GUY-shee-mahss
Thank you	DOH-moh ah-lee-GAH-toh
You are welcome	DOH-ee-tah-shee-mahsh-teh
Excuse me	soo-mee-mah-SEHN
I'm sorry	GOH-men-nah-sigh
I'm sorry (for someone)	oh-kee-no-DOH-koh-dess
Goodbye	sah-yoh-NAH-rah
See you later	JAH-mah-tah
Yes	high
No	ee-YEH
Yesterday	kee-NO
Tomorrow	AHSH-tah
Today	kee-YO
I do not understand.	CHOH TOH wah-kah-lee-mah-SEHN.
I do understand.	wah-kah-lee-MAHSH-tah
Understand me?	wah-kah-lee-MAHSS-kah?
Mr., Mrs. Madame, Miss	(last name) -sahn.
You	ah-NAH-tah
Me	wah-TAWK-shee
Go straight ahead	mah-SOO-goo
Turn right	MEE-gee-dess ("g" as in good)
Turn left	hee-DAH-lee-dess
Where is...?	(thing) -wah DOH-koh-dess-kah?
a toilet	(women say) oh-TEH-ah-rye (men say) BEN-joh
a doctor	oh-EE-shah
a hotel	ho-TEH-roo
a bank	GEEN-koh
a police station	KOH-bahn
a policeman	oh-mah-WAH-lee-sahn
a telephone	DEN-wah
I'm hungry.	oh-NAH-kangah-SWEE-tah.
Please bring me the bill.	kahn-joh-OH oh-neh-GUY-shee-mahss.
How much is it?	ee-KOO-rah-dess-kah?
I now partake [Said immediately before taking the first bite of food at a meal]	ee-tah-DAH-kee-mahss.
It tastes delicious.	oy-SHEE-dess
Please stop. (That's enough.)	mo-EE-dess
I am an American	wah-TAHK-shee-wah ah-MEH-lee-kah-jeen-dess.
It is. . .	(thing) -dess
What is it?	NAHN-dess-kah?
Please speak in English	egg-oh-deh-hahn-AHSH-teh-koo-da-sigh
Once again, please.	moh-EE-chee-doh

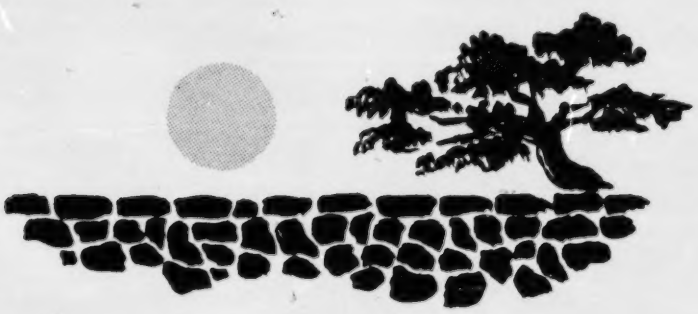
The beginning

You are now at the real beginning of your cultural experience in Japan. You will find that the old cliche, "Experience is the best teacher," will be true. You will undoubtedly learn much more from your own experiences, successes, and failures, than from this Learning Aid. However, this information gives you some principles for effectively communicating with people of another culture. Review this Learning Aid as needed. Only as you experience similar situations will you really begin to understand what you have learned.

While in Japan you will be tempted at times to wonder about the "strange foreigners" around you. At these times, it would be good to remind yourself that the Japanese are just reflecting their culture and that in fact you are the foreigner, the one who is different.

The concepts presented in this booklet will not always apply in every situation or in every part of the country. It does provide some of the most basic facts about Japanese behavior and some of the premises upon which Japanese life is based.

You are going to make mistakes. But don't let this worry you excessively. The Japanese will understand that you are new to their culture, and because of this they will accept more mistakes from you than they would from someone else. However, don't let this goodwill on their part make your efforts any less than whole-hearted. As you try to speak their language, both linguistically and culturally, you will be surprised at the new dimensions of your experience.



Appendix

A: NIHON AND NATIONALISM
B: THE EMPEROR
C: THE SAMURAI
D: STORIES ABOUT JAPANESE FEELING AND ATTITUDES

Appendix A

Nihon and nationalism

Anciently the first inhabitants of the islands known as Japan referred to their homeland as *Yamato*, which was the name of the clan who united Japan and became the royal family. In the seventh century one of the great *Yamoto* rulers, *Shotoku*, sent messages to the great civilization to the west, the Chinese. His first message he

addressed from "the Sun of Heaven in the land where the Sun Rises" to "the Sun of Heaven in the land where the Sun Sets." His second was from "the Emperor of the East" to "the Emperor of the West."

Of course, the Chinese repudiated these "barbarian" claims of equality. But a century later the Chinese began to replace their contemptuous name *Wa* for the name *Nihon*, which reflected the country's geographical location and perhaps the sun worship of their ruling line. The name *Nihon*, "the source of the sun," in its Chinese form of *Jih-pen* gave rise to our word "Japan."

The Japanese must have readily adopted the concept, for the ancient annals of Japan contend that the sun goddess, *Amaterasu Omikami*, made Japan a dwelling place for her descendants. Perhaps this feeling of divinity has left the Japanese, but the feeling of pride, like Shotoku's of old, in the "Land of the Rising Sun," still exists.

This pride, or feeling of nationalism, is an important subject to the foreigner traveling to Japan. The Japanese are extremely sensitive to criticism leveled against their nation. Because of their modesty they themselves will demean Japan to a foreigner with comments such as, "Japan is very small compared with your country, isn't it?" But you must never agree with this kind of statement. The most polite thing to do is merely deny their comment and say something complimentary.

Appendix B
The emperor

Japan boasts the oldest continuing royal family in the world. According to legend, the Sun Goddess sent her grandson, Prince Ninigi, from heaven to establish a divine race of men. She entrusted him with three sacred symbols of the imperial house: the sword, the jewel and the mirror.

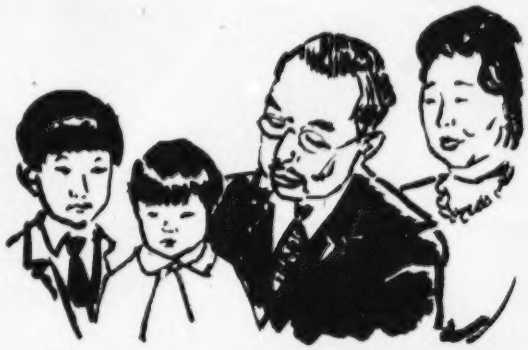
Several generations passed and Prince Ninigi's great grandson, Jimmu, finally mounted an expedition to unite the rest of the islands. Jimmu became the first emperor. The 124th emperor since that time is the present emperor, Hirohito.

The Japanese calendar dates from the reign of Jimmu (660 B.C.) and continues to the present day in a series of years and eras (the years an emperor reigns). The current era is known as the Showa era. Names used in this era-naming system are not the original names of the emperors, but are posthumous names. To add to the confusion, the Japanese calendar is supplemented by the Western calendar.

For many years the Japanese emperors were indeed remote figures, and the actual political control of the country was generally in the hands of the *Shogun* (military leaders) and other powerful factions. But the emperor always remained. His person was considered sacred. In some periods of Japanese history it meant death to even look upon the emperor as he passed.

Few emperors have enjoyed real political power. Today's emperor is such a monarch. He is the symbol of the state, much the same as the British king and queen. No well-informed Japanese looks upon the emperor as divine, although he receives a great deal of respect and affection as Japan's link with the past.

During World War II, the militarists used



the name of the emperor and the great love the people felt for him to gain the common people's loyalty. Until the United States agreed to the proposal that the emperor should not be held as a war criminal, unconditional surrender looked unlikely. (MacArthur estimated that the United States would have had a million casualties invading the Japanese mainland.) Authorities knowledgeable about Japanese culture pursuaded United States officials to agree that the emperor would not be considered in the war crimes proceedings.

Appendix C
The samurai

The *samurai* was a professional warrior who stalked through Japan until a little less than a hundred years ago. The *samurai* is the Japanese version of a knight in shining armor or the American cowboy. He is one hero Japanese boys envision themselves as being. *Samurai* actually did rule Japan until about a hundred years ago, when the Tokugawa, the last of the great *samurai* ruling families, were toppled from power.

The *samurai* lived by a code known as *bushido*, or the "way of the warrior." Though the code was conceived in various stages of complexity, every Japanese knows the basic tenets. The *samurai* honor was based upon the virtues of loyalty and bravery.

One privilege enjoyed by the *samurai* was that of *harakiri*, or "bowel cutting." *Harakiri* (or more formally called *seppuku*) was actually an elaborate ceremony of suicide performed by a dishonored *samurai* who wished to clear his name, or by one wishing to protest some injustice.

They also enjoyed the privilege of *kirisute gomen* or the right to execute those over whom they ruled if their will was opposed. This they could do to anyone for any reason without answering to the law.

Finally, only these warriors could wear the two symbolic swords as a sign of their rank. The last *samurai* died fighting to protect this privilege in Kagoshima under the leadership of Saigo Takamori, a hero in Japanese history.

Much of the illusion of the *samurai's* colorful character is in his costume. In different periods of history he had various ways of shaving his head, leaving ridges or topknots, and toy shops today sell *samurai* wigs in these styles. On formal occasions he wore a vest with huge, stiffened shoulder pieces (*kamishimo*). He sported a trouser-like split skirt known as a *hakama*, and wore a silk *obi* around his kimono. His two swords were as much a badge of rank as they were weapons.

The *samurai* way of life has a great unconscious influence upon the moral code of the Japanese male, just as the ideals of King Arthur's knights or the code of the cowboy lingers with his Western counterparts.

Appendix D
Stories about Japanese feelings and attitudes

The attitudes and values of Japan can be summarized through the stories known and loved by the people of that nation. These tales and historical events that have been recounted for generations give life to the things that have been academically discussed on the previous pages.

On

On is basically a "downward favor." Traditionally thought to be received from either the emperor, one's parents, or one's teacher, *on* is not a favor for which any favor is expected in return. Opposed to the idea of "give and take," *on* is the idea of "give and give."

The *on* relationship in the tale is neither an obligation nor a repayment of debt. *On* relationships are limitless for the giver and the receiver. If the receiver can do nothing to repay, it is all right for him to do nothing. He should bear in mind that if the chance comes to return *on* he should do so. In this story, the ideal was violated by Yohyo's greed despite the crane's desire to give and give.

Tsuru No On-Gaeshi
The Crane's Gratitude

Once upon a time,a young farmer named Yohyo was returning home from the fields. He found a crane which had been seriously wounded. He treated the crane's wounds and then set it free.

One midnight when the snow was falling quietly, a woman traveler knocked at the door of Yohyo's humble cottage. The bachelor Yohyo was surprised at the visit of a beautiful woman. He invited her in and gave her a warm bed.

The next morning when he got up she was working in the kitchen. After breakfast she told Yohyo that she had woven a garment and told him to go to the town and sell it. He was surprised to find that the townspeople would pay a great deal of money for such a garment.

As soon as he had the money in his hand, Yohyo became a different person. Not at all the gentle soul who had helped the wounded crane, he became greedy and selfish. He implored the woman to make another garment of the quality of the first. He pretended to be the same unselfish Yohyo as before, and it made her happy to bring him joy. She told him that she would weave as many as he wanted. Again he went to town to sell them for a high price. At last Yohyo became the richest man in town. He became cruel and demanded that she weave more and more.

Now the one thing she had asked Yohyo was that he not look upon her while she was weaving. For this reason he had made her a room adjoining the house. But greedy Yohyo wanted to accuse her of laziness one day, and therefore he decided to look in upon her. To his surprise there was no woman, but a crane. The crane's feathers were almost all gone, for it had plucked the feathers out, weaving from them a beautiful garment.

The crane announced to Yohyo that it was the same crane that he had saved. It had come back to do something nice for Yohyo. But now the promise had been broken, the crane said it would have to leave, and it flew away.

Giri

Giri is in a sense a fidelity to personal honor and loyalty to friends. To the Japanese the following stories are models of human behavior. When a person in Japan is criticized for "not knowing *giri*," it means that he is a man who does not know the righteous way nor the sincerity and depth of human relationships.

Buke Giri Monogatari
Samurai's Faithfulness

Two *samurai* friends had a custom of visiting each other's homes and talking about matters of the arts and intellectual things. They had continued this custom until they were old men.

On the promised day one *samurai* waited for his friend. Outside the snow was falling deep.

When the friend did not arrive on time the *samurai* wished that his friend would not risk the dangerous journey in such weather.

Later in the evening, however, the friend arrived. He had not forgotten the promise and he humbly apologized for being late. He had walked fourteen hours in the snow.

Konjaku Monogatari Tales Past and Present

There once lived an old couple in a province near Kyoto. They had a daughter, for whom they selected a mate.

Soon after the marriage, the young man died. The daughter refused to remarry, despite attempts to persuade her to do so. She argued, "Since my husband died so soon after my marriage, it is meant for me to be single."

Her parents were heartsick. To comfort them she said, "There are two swallows in the eaves of our house. Please capture the male and leave the female alone. If it comes back next year, bringing a mate, then I will marry again." Her father did as she asked.

The next year the swallow returned alone. The daughter remained single until her death.

Ninjo

The direct translation of *Ninjo* is "human feeling." *Ninjo* can be directed not only toward human beings, but also toward nature and inanimate things. *Ninjo* is not merely a human feeling or desire. When the Japanese say, "he is a man of *Ninjo*," they mean he is a true friend, he has a cordial nature, or he is warm-hearted. He is also a man who never forgets *on*. He is the type of man who understands the ideal type of human relationship. He is not a "give and take" person. He understands the meaning of "give and give."

The first two stories are historical events.

Kenshin and Shingen

In the age of the civil wars, around the middle of the sixteenth century, Uesugi Kenshin of Echigo and Takeda Shingen, Lord of Kai, were rivals for the military power of Japan.

After several years of fighting, it became evident that the Province of Kai was in serious need of salt. It seems that another rival of Shingen had cut his route from the sea. Kai was a mountainous country and, therefore, had no way to get salt.

When Uesugi Kenshin heard of the plight of the people of Kai, he sent a letter to Shingen: "We have fought fairly thus far. We shall fight as *samurai*, not with foul play." Kenshin then sent salt to the people of Kai.

Later, when Kenshin heard of the death of Shingen, he put all the food from his mouth and offered a prayer for his worthy enemy.

Minamoto and Tiara

In the twelfth century there was a huge battle between the families of Minamoto and Taira. Toward the end of the battle, Kumagai Naozane, a *samurai* of the Minamoto family, found an emeny on the beach trying to run away. Naozane overpowered the other soldier. When he noticed how young he was, he asked his age. The young man's name was Atsumori and he was only sixteen years old.

Naozane was at a loss. As a *samurai* he had to kill Atsumori, but as a father with a son of his own he felt he could not. He at last decided to set Atsumori free, but the young man begged Naozane to kill him like a *samurai* and gave him a flute. He told Naozane to send the flute to his mother, Lady Taira. Naozane did what the young man asked.

Later Naozane retired from his life as a soldier. He became a monk and prayed every day for the bliss of the young man he had killed.

Mono no Aware
A Feeling For Things

According to an ancient tale, a famous poet wrote the following *haiku* in the eighteenth century:

Asagao ni Tsurube torarete moraimizu.

I went to a neighbor's well
for the morning glories
were grown around the well bucket.

In the early morning, a woman went to the well to draw water. The morning glories were in full bloom around the well. She admired the scene, and noticed that one of the flowers had become coiled around the bucket. Because of her delicate heart, she could not cut the vines of the morning glory, so she went to her neighbor's well to get the water.

Chushingura
The Loyal Retainers

The story of Chushingura is easily interpreted if the concepts of *on*, *giri*, and *ninjo* are understood. This story depicts the essence of all three. No story of Japanese history is more symbolic of the character traits which are honored by the Japanese than this story of "The Faithful Retainers." It is the true national epic of Japan. The story is based on a true incident which happened during the feudal reign of the Tokugawa Bakufu (1701-1703).

Lord Asano, a minor lord, was summoned to the imperial court in Edo (now Tokyo) to officiate at an important ceremony. Being young and inexperienced, he had asked the help of a great lord, Kira.

Kira, the villain of the story, insulted Asano by telling him the wrong information on the day of the ceremony, which caused Asano to lose face. To save his name, Asano drew his sword in a rage and attempted to kill Kira. But he only succeeded in wounding him.

To have drawn his sword within the walls of the palace was a crime punishable by death. The Edo authorities ordered Lord Asano to commit *harakiri* to pay for his crime against Lord Kira and the emperor. They also confiscated his fief.

Lord Asano's faithful retainers were reduced to the status of *ronin* (masterless *samurai*) and were ordered by Edo not to try an act of revenge on Kira. The retainers were faced with two conflicting obligations: that which they owed to their lord, and that which they owed to the government.

Oishi, who now becomes the hero of the story, was Asano's most favored *samurai*. Oishi knew that to plan a vendetta on Kira openly would be dangerous. All Edo (Tokyo) was expecting and speculating about such an action, but Oishi and forty-six others, who by a clever test of faith Oishi had picked to aid him, renounced all intention of such a plan. They pretended to be men who "did not know *giri*." Their fathers-in-law, outraged by such dishonor, turned them out of their homes and their friends ridiculed them.

For two years they led lives of drunken reprobates. Then on a snowy winter night they assembled at Edo, broke into the residence of their lord's old enemy, Kira, and avenged their lord by taking the head of Kira and the heads of several of Kira's *samurai*. By this they also flouted the authority of Edo, but their self-sacrificing loyalty to their master had made them at once national heroes, living up to the best traditions of the warrior class.

After much debate, the government allowed them to commit *harakiri* to atone for their act. This they did to fulfill the promise made to the government.

Today the simple graves of Oishi and the forty-six faithful *ronin* stand side by side in a quiet little temple compound in Tokyo. Thousands of visitors come each year and leave their calling cards as a gesture of respect.

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